

# The SOUTHWORTHS had good Manors

What follows is a discussion of three of the Manor houses believed to be first built by Sir Gilbert de Southworth in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. They are arranged chronologically by date of construction and reflect the Manor of the same name.

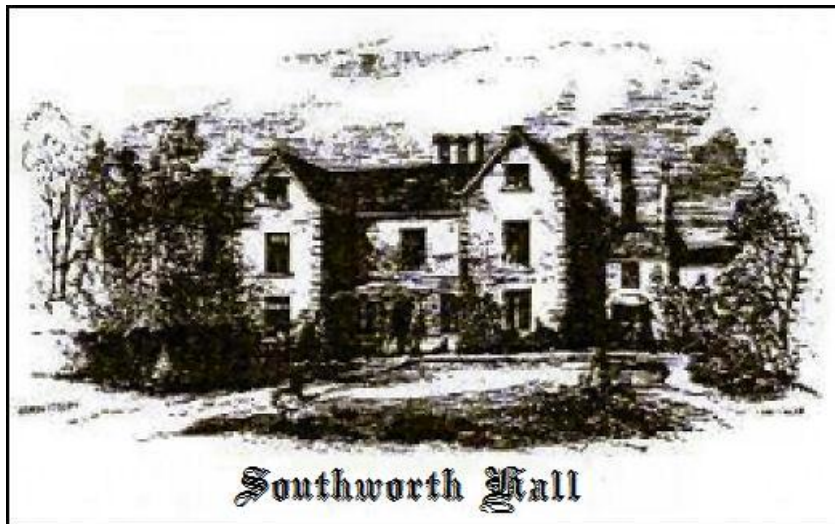
Manor/Hall	Page
Southworth Hall, circa 1320	2
Samlesbury Lower and Upper Halls, circa 1325 and 1330 respectively	8
Churches and Chapels of Samlesbury	20
Mellor Hall, circa 1340	26

## Southworth

The earliest mention of Southworth is as 1 of the 6 *vills* of Newton Hundred in 1066 (another was Croft). By 1100 Newton Hundred, which was named after its lord, had been replaced by the Barony of Makerfield and the *vill* of Southworth had become the *manor* of Southworth. The Barony had two parts: Newton *manor* and the *fief* of Newton. Southworth was part of the *fief* of Newton which included Wigan, Ince, Hindley, Abram, Ashton, Pemberton, Billinge, Winstanley, Haydock, Orrell, Winwick-with-Hulme, Woolston, Poulton, Middleton, Houghton, and half of Golborne. Newton *manor* included Lowton, Kenyon, Arbury, the other half of Golborne and the Church at Wigan. The Baron Newton was still overlord whether it was Newton Hundred or Makerfield Barony or Newton manor or the *fee* of Newton. Eventually the name of Makerfield incorporated the lord's name and became Newton-in-Makerfield. In 1346 SIR ROBERT DE LANGTON was Baron, holding 10 carucates from the King by the service of one knight's fee, wardship of Lancaster castle at Midsummer and *suit of the county and wapentake*. There were 17 tenants which encompass most, if not all, of those found in both the fief and the manor of Newton in 1100. Croft is a new name in 1346 while Woolston and Poulton are no longer found. Whether Croft subsumed all or part of one or both of those is possible, but not certain.

The manor of Southworth was about 10 miles north of the market town of Warrington in the Hundred of West Derby and originally encompassed about 3,000 acres. The manor was split into 2 unequal parts around 1125: the western  $\frac{1}{3}$  contained about 1,000 acres and retained the name Southworth manor, while the eastern  $\frac{2}{3}$ , about 2,000 acres, took the name of the *vill* of Croft.

## Southworth Manor



## LORDS OF SOUTHWORTH & CROFT

ROGER DE CROFT → GILBERT → GILBERT (*nephew*) → WILLIAM → GILBERT → GILBERT  
*c1175*                      <1212                      1219                      1270                      1290                      c1330

Exactly when the first manor-house was built on Southworth manor is unknown; there is a stone plaque *from the old Hall* (that was razed in the early 1900s) that states the *old Hall* had been built in 1400. But this is the date of the structure, not the year when the first hall was built. One author states that there was a *vill* of Southworth in 1086 but this may be incorrect; the same author listed Croft as a *vill* but it did not exist before 1125. That a Southworth manor of 3,000 acres did exist prior to 1125 favors the supposition that a manor-house existed, but there is no written record.

If there ever was a manor-house on Croft manor, no mention is extant; there may have been one built after it was separated from Southworth in 1125. Before Southworth was split, the whole was under the lord of Southworth, possibly residing at the first Southworth Hall. Without knowing the reason for splitting the manor it is difficult to say who held the lordship of either manor. It is known that Croft manor was granted to ROGER, a descendant of GOSPATRIC, in 1165, after which time he was known as ROGER DE CROFT. At some point in the following 25 years ROGER DE CROFT was granted Dalton manor in the far north of Lancashire and he transferred the seat of the DE CROFT family there, which required a manor-house. In 1190 ROGER DE CROFT was granted Southworth manor for providing services as falconer to the count of Mortain. It is not known if the Southworth Hall that had stood at the opening of the 12<sup>th</sup> century was still standing at its end. With ROGER DE CROFT seated at Dalton manor by 1190, the northern and southern manors would soon pass to different branches of the family. The actual acreage reported as being held by ROGER was a fraction of the total acreage; in Croft he held 120 of the 2000+ acres of manor lands and 180 of the 1000 acres in Southworth manor.<sup>1</sup> Just how ROGER, who was lord of Croft manor since about 1160, could have that title when he held less than 10% of the land is one more area that's fuzzy; perhaps his subtenants acreage was not included in his total.

In 1212 a country-wide listing of all properties was drawn up for KING JOHN. It may be the most complete listing of lands but its accuracy is lacking. For instance it states that Croft manor was held *for providing falconry services*; it was not.<sup>2</sup> Southworth manor was held since 1190 for providing services as falconer to the count of Mortain and the 180 acres (*j carucate and a half*) of Southworth, or *Suthewrthe*, though held by GILBERT DE CROFT, *was in the king's hands* in 1212. Perhaps this was because JOHN was no longer the count of Mortain; he became duke of Normandy in 1199, the same year he became the English KING JOHN. The falconer's service was commuted to a rent of 15*d* and Southworth manor returned to GILBERT DE CROFT before 1250.

The first possible documentation for the existence of a manor-house at Southworth is from 1219. In that year, Southworth manor was *gifted* from uncle-to-nephew and the record of that transaction allegedly mentions both the *manor* of Southworth and the *hall*. The 1219 charter states the manor is a gift to *his* nephew GILBERT and that GILBERT DE CROFT made the transfer with the consent of his heir. Nephew GILBERT agreed to pay one pound of black peppercorns *or* black pepper annually to the lord of Makerfield. Black peppercorns were luxury items and very expensive; a pound cost the equivalent of 20 hours of wages (today the cost is 15 minutes of wages). The grant was duly confirmed by THURSTAN BANASTRE, lord of Makerfield (who died in that year) and witnessed by HENRY DE CROFT, ROGER DE CROFT (relationship unknown) and THURSTAN's brother ROBERT BANASTRE. An annual payment of 13*s* 4*d* was later substituted for

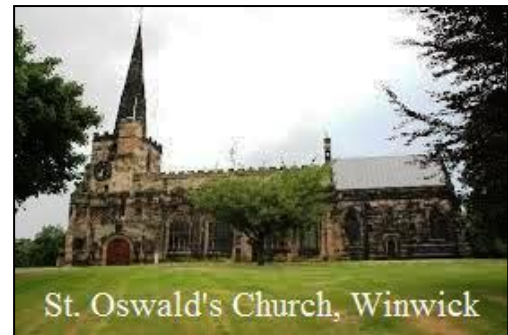
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<sup>1</sup> "Makerfield; The Great Inquest of Service within the Lyme," (1212) *Lancashire Inquisitions post mortem*, v 1, 1205-1307; p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> "Townships: Southworth with Croft," *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 4* (1911), pp. 168-170. URL: [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk). This is where this source confuses which manor was held by the falconer's service.

the pound of peppercorns *by the lord of Makerfield*; this confirms that payment was to be made to the lord of Makerfield and not to his uncle GILBERT DE CROFT.<sup>3</sup>

A manor-house was definitely standing in 1291 when a license was issued for a *chapel-at-ease* on Southworth manor. Saint Oswald's Roman Catholic Church in Winwick had served generations of residents of SOUTHWORTH manor, including the lords as attested to by the presence of the SOUTHWORTH arms on its tower. It was converted to the State mandated religion, first English Catholic, then Church of England, during the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. Since the manor-house Southworth Hall was considered *old* by 1300, it was probably built years before its first mention in 1219 and could be the one dating to some time before the 1125 split of Southworth manor.



Assuming the old hall of 1300 was the first hall, the second Southworth Hall dates to about 1320. The inscription in stone that dates it to 1400 is incorrect; an architectural analysis showed it to be about 80 years older. The construction techniques used in building Southworth Hall were compared with those used at Samlesbury Hall and the results indicated that, though they were contemporaneous, Southworth Hall was the older of the two. The dating of the structure through analysis of building techniques and materials places it in the 1310 – 1330 range. Given that Samlesbury Hall was built in 1325 and that the lord of Southworth manor lived in Southworth Hall before 1325, a logical scenario is the manor-house predating 1219 needed renovation or rebuilding by 1320. The manor-house at Samlesbury *had* to be rebuilt because it was destroyed in 1322 by Scottish raiders; while a similar fate could have befallen Southworth Hall, the records are silent. For whatever reason, destruction, age, &c, the Southworth Hall standing at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was built around 1320. The first known description comes from the latter half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century where the Hall is described as *a spacious building of brick, wood and plaster with two projecting gables*. The Hall originally had two stories. The hall was rebuilt in 1420 by SIR THOMAS DE SOUTHWORTH, lord of Southworth and Croft (and Samlesbury) and his wife JOAN. SIR THOMAS became lord in 1415, at the age of 22; his wife was JOAN DE BOTHE. They soon applied to HENRY DE HALSALL, Archdeacon of Chester, for a license to build a chapel to be attached to their manor-house at Southworth (and another at Samlesbury Lower Hall). The Archdeaconry was the northernmost extent of the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield and, in 1420, WILLIAM HEYWORTH, Bishop of Lichfield issued the license and a chapel was soon built but no description of it is known to exist. SIR THOMAS and JOAN favored living at the refurbished Southworth Hall where they raised their family of at least 4 children. After SIR THOMAS died in 1432 nothing else is heard about Southworth Hall until the middle of the next century.

What became of the attached chapel is unknown, but the suppression of the Roman Catholic Church meant it had to be torn down or repurposed and incorporated into the main hall by mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. The lords of Southworth were fervent Roman Catholics and built a secret chapel for Mass to be heard in one of the Halls gable rooms around 1565; a couple *priest-holes* were secreted about the Hall at the same time. Once again, the records fall silent for about a century when another story has the lord of Southworth renting Croft manor to a *CAPTAIN BRILLOCK*, a

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

*Member of Parliament* but a search of Parliament's official history has no record of any such member. A major renovation of Southworth Hall was undertaken in conjunction with a similar project at Lower Hall in Samlesbury in 1604 by THOMAS SOUTHWORTH. He had been lord since the death of his father SIR JOHN SOUTHWORTH, in 1595 but had only just come into possession of the properties after 1603. The renovations were so costly and the family finances were so dismal, that he had to mortgage the Lower Brockholes property to pay for them. On 24 February 1607 he and his wife ROSAMOND LISTER, with two other couples, granted an *annuity of £100 issuing out of the manor-house of THOMAS SOUTHWORTH lately erected in Southworth called Southworth Hall and the lands belonging thereto to hold during the lives of THOMAS and ROSAMOND* to MARTIN, MICHAEL and LAWRENCE LISTER, in-laws no doubt, to help bolster the failing SOUTHWORTH fortunes.

Southworth manor, including the Hall, which had been mortgaged to the LISTERS in 1607, may have defaulted to them before the November 1616 death of THOMAS but managed to be saved by unknown means (possibly by loans from SIR THOMAS IRELAND). His eponymous grandson and heir THOMAS sold some land in Croft to JAMES BANKES of Winstanley in 1618 and some other Southworth parcels to THOMAS GOULDEN around the same time. A deed dated September 1621 reflects the purchase by SIR THOMAS IRELAND of Bewsey, one of the parties granting the annuity in 1607, of the *manors, lands, tenements, rents, and services in Southworth, Croft, Middleton, Arbury, Houghton* (including Peel Hall), *Winwick, Hulme, Orford, Warrington, Fearnhead, Poulton, and Woolston* for £500 from THOMAS SOUTHWORTH of Samlesbury. The sale was done in accordance with agreements previously made by the seller's father JOHN SOUTHWORTH and grandfather THOMAS SOUTHWORTH which included the payment of an annuity for £13 6s 8d to WILLIAM SOUTHWORTH, perhaps the seller's uncle. SIR IRELAND, whose family had been Barons of Warrington, sold Southworth manor later in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the GERARDS of Bryn.

The Commissioners of Enquiry had been empowered to look into the matter of estates held by traitors, meaning Catholics, and where possible confiscate the lands. On 27 July 1716, the undersheriff and bailiff were ordered to Southworth to assist in confiscating the manor; apparently it was another Catholic that the manor was sold to a century earlier. The estate appears more than once in the Treasury's office *Registers of Forfeited Estates* of 1717 with notations as late as 1740 being found.<sup>4</sup> Southworth manor and Southworth Hall appear to have been owned by different members of the GERARD family. In 1743 RICHARD GERARD bequeathed Southworth and Croft manors to his brother THOMAS, a Jesuit priest. Yet other records reflect a 1744 purchase of Southworth Hall by WILLIAM GERARD of Ince Hall from his cousin JOHN BEAUMONT BYERLEY. After a decade or so, WILLIAM GERARD donated Southworth Hall to the Jesuits who already held the manor through FATHER THOMAS GERARD. The Jesuits had established a mission at Southworth in the late 1600s where they held weekly Mass since then. GERVASE HAMERTON, a Jesuit, was in charge of the mission of Southworth in 1701. At the end of the century, a Jesuit college took up temporary residence. The order also had charge of nearby Rixton Hall and Culcheth manor probably ran the college from all three.<sup>5</sup> The *Jesuit College at Saint-Omer* was established in 1593 in the Spanish Netherlands but with the French Revolution,

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<sup>4</sup> "Treasury Warrants: August 1717, 1-5" and "Declared Accounts: Forfeited Estates," *Calendar of Treasury books*, Volume 31: 1717 (1960), pp. CDXVI-CDXXIV, 480-489. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>

<sup>5</sup> Records of the English Province of the Society for Jesus, Volume 1 (1877) and 'Townships: Rixton with Glazebrook', *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 3* (1907), pp. 334-340.



was forced to abandon the continent, ending up at Stonyhurst Hall in Lancashire. The buildings there were in a state of disrepair and while renovations were being made, the school took over Southworth Hall and its private lands, plus 20 more acres. When the college buildings were ready for students, the priests-holes built, and a tunnel running from Saint Mary's Hall into the gardens for use during raids (the tunnel still exists at Stonyhurst College), Southworth Hall returned to being a Jesuit mission that worked with FATHER LOUIS DE RICHEBEC, an exile from Normandy, to create a safer environment. The hall had been added onto at some point after 1621 with the addition of a 3<sup>rd</sup> story plus an *annex*. Logically it was the college that would need the most room and could absorb such a cost much easier than a tenant farmer with just 20 acres of ground. It remained as such until 1827, when FATHER RICHEBEC'S new church in Croft, Saint Lewis' Roman Catholic Church, was completed. Saint Lewis' Church, whose Patron is SAINT LOUIS, King of France, continues to serve the local community to this day.<sup>6</sup> The limited registers of the Jesuits contain records from 1795 to 1827 were turned over to the new Church. The Southworth chapel remained in use for some years after 1827. Between 1820 and 1823 THOMAS CLAUGHTON of Haydock had title but it was repossessed. The Jesuits then sold to EDWARD GREENALL of Warrington; when he died in 1836 the manor was inherited by his 3<sup>rd</sup> son JOHN GREENALL. When JOHN died in 1850, the manor was inherited by his daughter ELIZABETH, LADY SHIFFNER. She sold it to SAMUEL BROOKS, after whose death it passed to a younger son THOMAS BROOKS. In 1911 the owners were 2 sons of THOMAS BROOKS: JOSEPH RAYNOR BROOKS and EDWARD BROOKS.<sup>7</sup> After an unknown number of renovations, additions and modifications that changed the manor-house over the centuries it was time to rebuild. In 1931 the Hall was bought by HARRY FAIRCLOUGH who decided to rebuild it, retaining the original dimensions of the Hall and returning it to a 2-storey structure with no annex. Comparison with the etching on the first page of this section does show the old and the new Halls to be quite similar. During the course of the rebuild, a fireplace with a wide stone arch, dating from before 1500, was discovered behind a wall and now is regularly used as it had been 600 years ago. The third Southworth Hall remains in the FAIRCLOUGH family; the current owner is MARK FAIRCLOUGH.



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<sup>6</sup> Bolton History Centre, Bolton, County Lancaster.

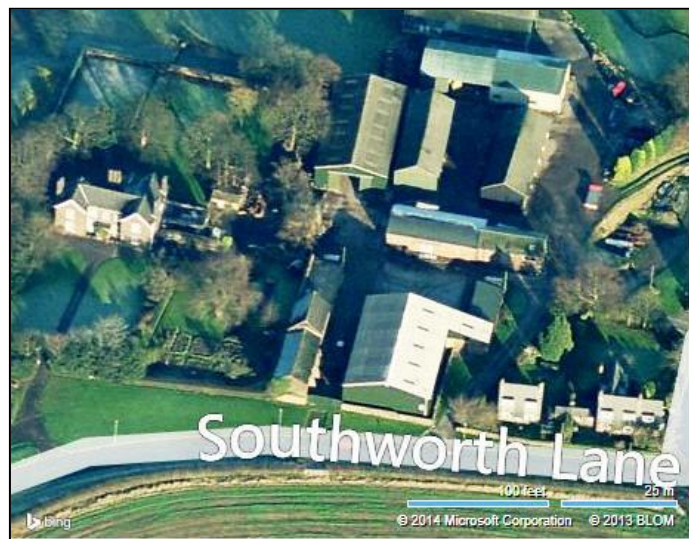
<sup>7</sup> "Townships: Southworth with Croft," *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 4* (1911), pp. 168-170.

Three 19<sup>th</sup> century descriptions survive: the 1831 description states it *once belonged to the Roman Catholic college of Stonyhurst, and part of it is still used as a chapel by professors of that religion*.<sup>8</sup> An 1850 describes the structure as *a farmhouse of wood, plaster and brick* and in the 1880s it was a *three-storey residence with projecting gabled sides and a two storey annex*.

Records from the Diocese of Chester note that the Hall was in existence during the reign of HENRY IV (1399 – 1413) and had a Roman Catholic chapel during Elizabethan times (1558 – 1603). A description of Christ Church in the parish of *Croft with Southworth* from 1848 states:

*The 1,851 acre parish, with 1,155 inhabitants, was formed out of Winwick parish by act of parliament, in 1845. The church was erected in 1833, at the cost of £4000, defrayed by the rector of Winwick and society grants. The CROFT family held lands in Croft in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century; Southworth gave name to the knightly family of SOUTHWORTH. They subsequently passed to other families, and also belonged to the Roman Catholic establishment at Stonyhurst. The population consists partly of handloom weavers. There are places of worship for Unitarians and Methodists; and a Roman Catholic chapel.*<sup>9</sup>

Southworth Manor lands have been the sight of a sandstone quarry for decades. Somewhat unexpectedly, areas of Southworth Hall Farm, as some of the manor is known, have turned up some great archeological finds. Two bronze axes were found in 1881 and a fine flint knife came to light in 1961, both near Southworth Hall. An ancient burial site, or barrow, was being excavated in 1980 when an earlier and larger barrow, with an estimated 800 burials, was found by the Archaeology Department at Liverpool University. Their dig yielded two collapsed urns, one dating to 2,100 BCE, and three accessory vessels which are on display at the Warrington Museum.



For most of the last 2 centuries the manor lands were incorporated into the townships of Burtonwood, Southworth-with-Croft, Poulton and Woolston. A major redistricting changed this in 1974. Southworth-with-Croft was combined with a small part of Woolston to form the new Croft Township. The remaining part of Woolston was divided into two separate townships, each named Woolston, but one remains within Lancashire, the other is in Cheshire. Poulton and Burtonwood are now the northern most parts of Warrington Borough which was also transferred to Cheshire County.

<sup>8</sup> "The Parish of Winick" Lancashire Online Parish Church Project, citing Rosemary Keery, *Historic Culcheth - The Story of a Village*. ©Lancashire OnLine Parish Clerks; <http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Winwick/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> "Crewe - Croft," *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1848), pp. 725-729. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>.

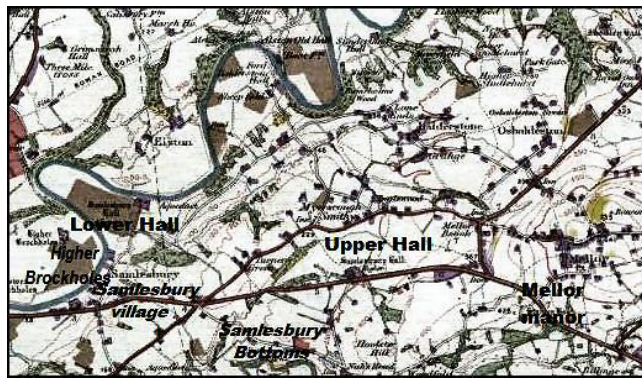


## Samlesbury Manor

In Saxon times the area was held by EDWARD THE CONFESSOR but by the late 12th century COSPATRIC DE SAMLESBURY was the manorial lord, holding it in *thegnage* to the DE LACEYS. *Thegnage* meant that the Lord was responsible for supplying a certain size contingent of men for the King's armies; in the case of Samlesbury, the contingent repeatedly appears as a hundred men.



Thus COSPATRIC DE SAMLESBURY was the first lord of Samlesbury manor. He built a large, timber manor house in a horse-shoe bend on the south bank of the River Ribble which enclosed it on three sides.<sup>1</sup> This same area was also the site of the later manor houses of Samlesbury lords.



As late as 1936 there was visible evidence of several dwellings within a quarter mile radius from the present Lower Hall Farm.<sup>2</sup> One was described at that time as marking the foundation of COSPATRIC's manor-house while a second was probably the later D'EWYAS stone tower. COSPATRIC's timber house had a courtyard surrounded by a strong wall to keep out invaders. The hall was located beside a ford, at one of the few crossing points across the River Ribble, on

the winding old road between Blackburn and Preston, now named Potters Lane. Many descriptions say there was a defensive moat around the hall but this is unlikely. First, given the layout and style of buildings, a moat wouldn't offer much benefit. Second, fish had to be supplied for Friday meals and most manors had some sort of pond to keep a store of fish; the "moat" was really a fish pond and served no defensive purpose. A manor also had to have a good store of grain and a place to have it ground; this requirement was filled by construction of a grain mill in nearby Samlesbury Bottoms.

The D'EWYAS construction was stone and has often been described as a Peel Tower but this is probably incorrect. More likely it was a *bastle house* – a stone structure that stabled animals on the ground floor with living quarters on the first floor (what we call the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor). The floors were connected through a small opening inside wherein a ladder was lowered from above for access; in safer areas a small staircase leading to a heavy door connected the two levels.



<sup>1</sup> "Townships: Samlesbury," *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 6* (1911), pp. 303-313. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> Brief History of Samlesbury & Cuerdale; <http://www.samlesbury.org.uk/history.htm>



COSPATRICK was also lord of the Manor of Walton-le-Dale immediately east of Samlesbury. From this manor he carved out the 1,000 acre Mellor Manor which he granted to a younger son. Mellor and Samlesbury were reunited under the D'EWYAS family.

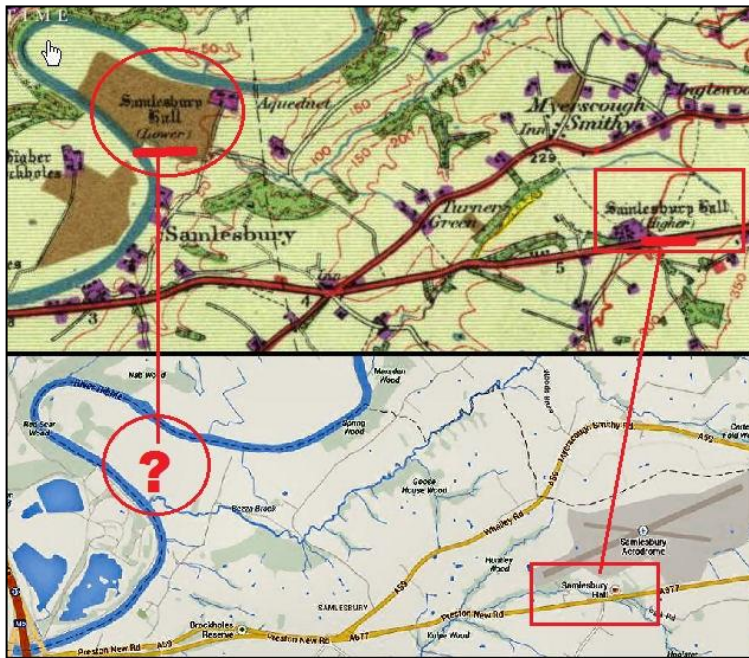
## Manor houses at Samlesbury

COSPATRICK'S manor house was located near an ancient ford that crossed between Samlesbury and Elston. He established a ferry service on the Ribble between the manor and that of Brockholes on the opposite bank.<sup>3</sup> Traversing the river wasn't the only reason to drop by – the Ferry Boat House also served beer.<sup>4</sup>

In 1243 Samlesbury was one of 59 manors in the Blackburn Hundred. A Manor could be held in *knight's service* which was where the men of the contingents required of the *thegnage* came from – these were usually small manors, enough to support just the knight and his family but some did encompass a thousand acres. In early 1322 THOMAS, 2<sup>ND</sup> EARL OF LANCASTER was at the head of a baronial rebellion against EDWARD II. While Lancaster only had 13 knights and 51 men-at-arms at the time the forces available to the EARL were so great that his military was a serious threat to that of the king. The Lancaster knights and men-at-arms cost £15 a year to maintain. This doesn't sound like a lot of money, but it was a hefty expense. To give you a sense of value: in 1374 £15 paid the rent on a London merchant's house for over 6 years; £15 was what a skilled laborer could expect to earn in 3 years!



THOMAS allied with ROBERT I, KING OF SCOTLAND whose truce with England ended in January 1322. THOMAS refused to intervene when 3 Scottish contingents invaded at the end of January 1322. EDWARD ignored the Scots, focusing on ending the rebellion which saw THOMAS beheaded on 22 March 1322. *Ransacking for several weeks they set their eyes on the D'EWYAS manor, a 4-story square stone tower, which was left as a burning ruin at the end of summer 1322. The Scots looted Preston and set fire to some of its wooden buildings before rampaging throughout the pastoral landscape of Grimsargh-with-Brockholes with its timeless river and field mosaics. 'The Ribble ford was used by ROBERT THE BRUCE in*



<sup>3</sup> Samlesbury and Cuerdale at <http://www.samlesbury.org.uk/history.htm>

<sup>4</sup> R. Easton, *A History of Samlesbury in the Hundred of Blackburn* (1936)

*midsummer 1322 when he burnt Lower Hall and robbed Samlesbury Church of valuables'. After four weeks of absolute mayhem they went home to Scotland.* "Samlesbury Church" means Saint Leonard-the-Less and "Lower Hall" supports the idea that Samlesbury, which had two lords since 1290, also had two manor houses from an early date. The Scots, left unchecked by the Royal armies who were after LANCASTER and by the Baronial armies who were being chased by the Royal army or helping the Royal army in the pursuit of LANCASTER, sacked many towns and Samlesbury was one of the southernmost to be left in ruins. A writ issued 19 October 1323 called for an investigation into the ransacking of Samlesbury to find out if any responsibility for the damage was through the negligence of the keeper. The Inquest was held at Penwortham on 20 January 1324. A moiety in Samlesbury was forfeited by ROBERT DE HOLAND and WILLIAM DE HOLDENE was the appointed keeper of the manor since the forfeit. Twelve statements were taken and no negligence on the part of keeper of the manor was found. All losses were solely due to the sudden coming of the Scots who carried away the plunder towards Scotland. Plundered items included 18 oxen, 100 lances, saddles & reins; vestments, chalice, missal, and a psalter were taken from the chapel; bowls, bedding and pots from the manor &c. Losses due to robbery came to £143 19s 6d.<sup>5</sup> Property damage was not accounted for in this record. From this record alone it's difficult to state with any certainty whether or not the damages were spread throughout the manor or not. The specific mention of the DE HOLAND moiety and its keeper, who was cleared of wrongdoing, is quite specific and there being no mention of the D'EWYAS moiety, despite the known destruction of their tower, leads one to believe that something else was going on with the DE HOLAND moiety.

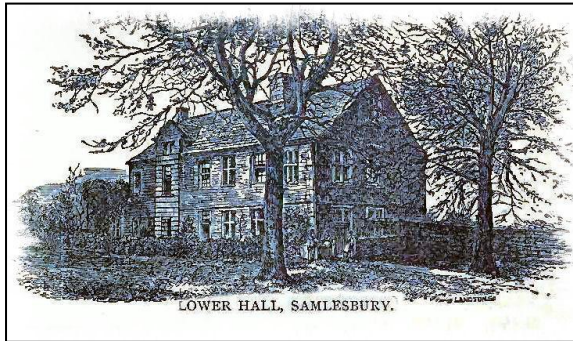
On 16 August 1325 an inquisition was held regarding NICHOLAS D'EWYAS wish to insure the ownership of the manor. He held it from the king in chief, which required an inquisition to discover if such a move would deprive the king of any entitlement. It did not and the license granting the manor to NICHOLAS, then to his daughter ALICE and her heirs by GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH, son of GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH, and then to the *right* heirs of NICHOLAS D'EWYAS was issued on 12 November 1325.<sup>6</sup>

The transfer of Samlesbury manor from NICHOLAS D'EWYAS to GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH occurred in the last 6 weeks of 1325 (considering the above license being issued in November 1325). In 1324 the lord directly responsible to the king was NICHOLAS D'EWYAS while in 1325 it was GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH. The transfer of Samlesbury has yet to be found but said transfer is proven by a little-known holding of the manor of Samlesbury. A portion of the manor of Alston, on the north side of the river Ribble, was held by the lord of Samlesbury. This share was granted to ADAM DE HOGHTON around 1230 and after this, despite the DE HOGHTON responsibility to the Samlesbury lord, records usually omit Samlesbury as the intermediate lord between DE HOGHTON and the king. The 1324 and 1325 records that involve Alston name the person who was directly responsible to the king, D'EWYAS and SOUTHWORTH respectively. Since Alston was owned by Samlesbury manor, and not D'EWYAS or SOUTHWORTH as individuals, their names can only appear in the records in their capacity as lord of Samlesbury with D'EWYAS named in 1324 and SOUTHWORTH in 1325.

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<sup>5</sup>"Inquest into the sacking of Samlesbury by the Scots, 20 January 1324," *Lancashire Inquisitions post mortem*, v 2, 1310-1333; pp. 162-4.

<sup>6</sup>"Inquisition *ad quod damnum* 16 August 1325," *Lancashire Inquisitions post mortem*, v 3, 1325 and holdings in 1335-6; pp. 23-4. License in *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Edward II, v5, p. 190. (GR Boynton, University of Iowa; 2003).



The lord of Southworth manor was also lord of Samlesbury manor beginning in 1325 but opted to continue with the Southworth manor appellation for almost a hundred years which was puzzling at first. In fact, the DE SOUTHWORTH never became the DE SAMLESBURY as it had in the time of WILLIAM DE SAMLESBURY. Both manors were large, robust and growing so it's difficult to say if one was more prominent but at least one historian maintains that, of the two, Southworth Hall was,

by far, the grander. In 1336 Samlesbury manor had a manorial court that could hear cases on residents and non-residents which added significant amounts to the manorial income through fines and penalties. It made profits from selling peat for fuel and wood for construction as well as iron from a mine, mills, and fisheries, apples from two orchards and by selling services such as pasturing or grazing of livestock. Income was also generated on 213 acres of arable land and 9 acres of meadow reserved to the manor plus yearly rents of £6 2s 6d on about 130 acres that was sublet to 18 tenants.<sup>7</sup> Based on size alone, Southworth was the winner. Southworth also comes out on top in another number, specifically the number *one*. There was one, and only *one*, lord of Southworth.

Samlesbury, on the other hand, had two or more lords beginning with the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century bequest of SIR WILLIAM SAMLESBURY dividing the manor equally between his 3 daughters. Their husbands were each a lord of Samlesbury. The number was reduced to 2 after a sister died with no surviving offspring, but it was only reduced after her husband, who survived her by 20+ years, died! From 1397 through 1677 at least there were always two lords of Samlesbury manor. This was believed to explain the existence of two manor houses, one for the DE HOLAND lord and the other for the DE SOUTHWORTH lord. However both manor houses seem to have been occupied by SOUTHWORTH family members when each hall is mentioned in records. SIR ROBERT DE HOLAND was lord of Upholland which was a few miles north of Samlesbury and took care of all of THOMAS OF LANCASTER'S affairs in the county. Upholland hall had been the family seat for several generations and there was no reason for him to have a hall at Samlesbury.

There was the Lower Hall, seat of the SOUTHWORTHS on the River Ribble and, a couple miles distant, the Upper Hall, which has only been found to have been occupied by a SOUTHWORTH relative on what is now New Preston Road. Lower Hall was built of red sandstone and measured 96' in length; its front faced south and was broken by an 11' wide projection that marked the entrance. By 1911 the roof was gone and the front wall remained to the height of 12', reaching the first floor windows only and what remained of the rear wall was even less. This photograph had the caption "the former site of Upper Hall" – Upper Hall is still standing; this is the site of Lower Hall.



<sup>7</sup> Lancashire Inquisitions post mortem, v 3, 1325 and holdings in 1335-6, pp.41-4.

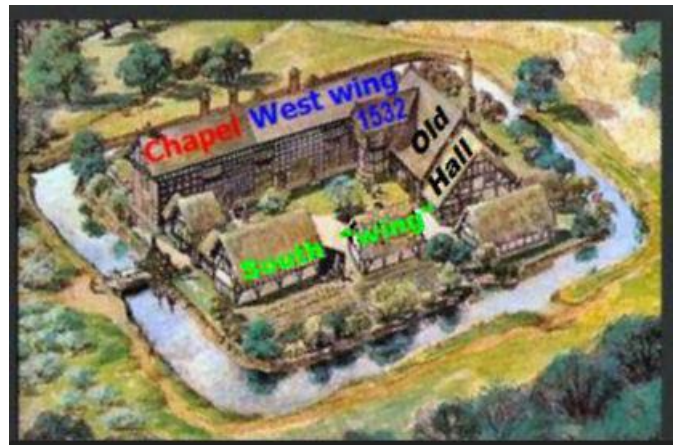


References to the manors are often muddled and mistakes made in the placement of a specific event, such as the Scots raid. The confusion continues today as the site given for the Upper Hall on New Preston Road, immediately south of the Aerodrome, is now the site of the Samlesbury Lower Hall (see map above). The site of Lower Hall, as located on several centuries of maps, should be on the finger of land, 1,500' wide and just under a mile long, *pointing* west and lying west of Dean Lane and north of Bezza Brook; however, no manor house is found there.

Descriptions of the raid vary with some saying the manor was sacked and others saying it also burned to the ground. The burning of the manor is the fact that puts the old D'EWYAS stone tower on the same piece of land that has been occupied by the Lower Hall since 1325. The Upper Hall may have escaped being burned during the raid but it too was ransacked. Both houses were quite large (in the 1590s, Lower Hall had 40 or more people living there) so it isn't surprising to find SOUTHWORTHS occupying both.

Think how often houses are remodeled today and you can bet the Halls have gone through changes over the centuries, many, many changes. There were several remodels but descriptions are never specific enough to identify with absolute certainty exactly which hall the writer is referring to since *Upper* and *Lower* were used indiscriminately. Lower Hall was still standing in 1877 though buildings in the rear had tumbled into the river some decades earlier. On the other hand, parts of Lower Hall that date to the reign of EDWARD III (1327 – 1377) are to be found in the Great Banqueting Hall, the structure built by GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH in the late 1320s.

1532-5 modifications: SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH is known to have remodeled parts of the existing structure as well as adding new construction to Samlesbury between 1532 and 1535 because he had his initials and the year carved into a movable screen which survived until a 19<sup>th</sup> century remodel. The Great Hall had a two-story seven-sided circular “bump out” into what was then the courtyard. The north wall was completely rebuilt in stone with mullioned windows. A great fireplace & chimney replaced the earlier open central fire. He built the box-framed two-story **West wing** in the 1530s to connect the Hall with the separate **Chapel** that was at least a century old. To do so, the wing was at an acute angle to the Hall and, to make the new construction less obvious, it rose to the same height as the old chapel. He refaced the south and west outer walls to match the quatrefoil infilling of the **Hall**. The buildings making up the **south “wing”** were torn down; they may have been connected to the Hall at some earlier point.





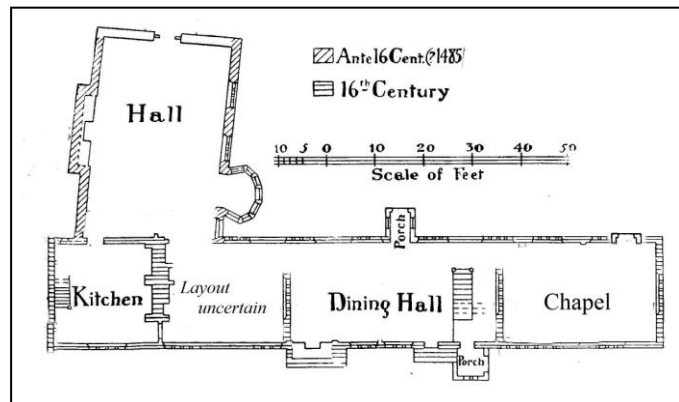
## THE ROAD FROM **SAMLESBURY HALL** TO **SAMLESBURY MANOR**

The half of Samlesbury that was owned by the D'EWYAS passed to GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH, possibly as a part of the dower of ALICIA D'EWYAS. GILBERT undertook the refurbishment of the ruined Lower Hall soon after his 1325 marriage and the *building the Upper Hall (Greater Hall) started shortly after this*. In 1335 Gilbert held 180 acres of land and meadow with a mill. To be a Manor House, certain requirements had to meet: a store of grain store, a mill and mill pond for grinding the grain, enough fish for Fridays and a Roman Catholic chapel with resident priest. The moat that once surrounded the Lower Hall was not for defensive purposes; it was for raising fish. At nearby Samlesbury Bottoms, a water mill was built for the manor before 1420. A Manor House was strictly divided among the Lord and Lady (25%), the servants (25%) and the rest "for all." Under the tenure of GILBERT'S grandson THOMAS, the requirements were met in 1420 with the completion of the chapel. A branch of the D'EWYAS relocated to Fishwick Hall near Preston but when this occurred is not known other than before 1586. A century later finds a D'EWYAS of Fishwick Hall submitting a fictitious pedigree and claiming a right to the Southworth blazon before the Herald during the 1664 Visitation to Lancashire.

In 1532 SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH embarked on a major refurbishing of the Lower Hall and added new construction, the so-called *southwest wing*. He had the north wing built connecting to the chapel; its roofline duplicated that of the chapel, high with a steep pitch, to blend the chapel and the wing. This was when the Roman Catholic chapel to Saint Chad was built *behind* Lower Hall.

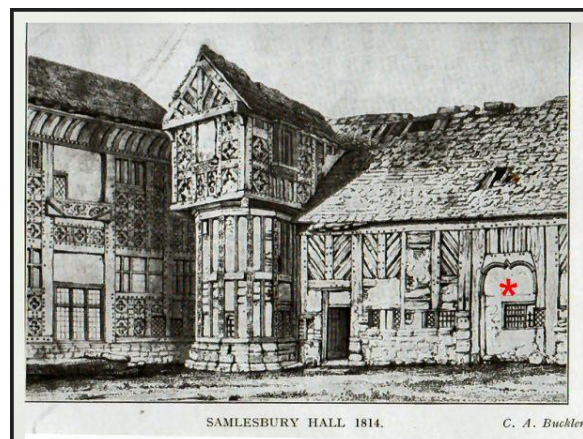
Before 1580, complaints of harboring a priest and hearing mass were being heard. In 1581 the aging SIR JOHN SOUTHWORTH was found guilty of harboring a priest, and not just any priest, but EDWARD CAMPION, the foremost and loudest Jesuit in England. CAMPION'S brother JOHN was allegedly apprehended at Lower Hall and,

when questioned on his brother's whereabouts, he died. That's the States version; the other version is that he was tortured to death at the manor. It has been most difficult to follow up on this story to check its veracity. The information available on JOHN CAMPION is limited. SIR JOHN was fined £1100 and imprisoned for about 7 years. He was rearrested in 1586 on unknown charges and held in prison until his release by 1590. Lower Hall was the focus of a government raid in 1592 with contraband discovered during the ransacking. The contraband included altar cloths, candelabra and religious images; SIR JOHN and his son and heir THOMAS were convicted and sent to prison. SIR JOHN was released in 1594 and returned to Lower Hall. In November of the following year he died. At the time of his passing his sons THOMAS, CHRISTOPHER and JOHN were serving prison sentences. With the heir in prison since 1592, SIR JOHN set up a 7-year trust and placed all of the vast real estate holdings in it; the trustees were 3 of his daughters who were to use the proceeds to pay off his fines. The new lord, THOMAS, was probably released from prison before the expiration of the trust in 1603. He immediately started a massive remodel of Lower Hall, the cost of which was staggering – he sold the property opposite Lower Hall on the west bank of the River Ribble, Lower Brockholes, in 1604 to pay for the remodel.



The first Anglican SOUTHWORTH lord of Samlesbury was THOMAS SOUTHWORTH who became lord upon the death of the remodeling THOMAS SOUTHWORTH in 1616. He was the eldest grandson of THOMAS SOUTHWORTH, being the son and heir of JOHN SOUTHWORTH who died in 1612. This JOHN was the first Anglican SOUTHWORTH in the line of succession, converting in the early 1590s. His children were raised in the new religion but he died 4 years before his father and never became lord. With his death, his son THOMAS became the heir-apparent for THOMAS, the living lord. It is unlikely that the two THOMAS's got along well but since many converts were Anglican in name only, to avoid the recusancy penalties and fines, their differences could come from a number of areas. The elder THOMAS's brother FATHER CHRISTOPHER had instigated false charges of witchcraft against the younger THOMAS's mother JANE in 1612 causing much grief. The estate the younger THOMAS inherited was less than half of that owned by the elder THOMAS due to stipulations found in the 1595 Will of SIR JOHN SOUTHWORTH. He could only inherit a third of the manor as it stood in 1596; accounting for the properties disposed of by the elder THOMAS, the estate to be inherited was slightly less than half its value when the elder THOMAS died in 1616. Samlesbury shown as being *imparked* on maps in 1598 and 1610, which usually meant some land designated as parkland had been added immediately adjacent to the manor-house meaning surrounded by park; comparing the two maps the parkland may have been enlarged and, if so, it was done by JAMES I after 1603.<sup>8</sup>

Whether it was due to inheriting over-mortgaged properties and a staggering debt from levied fines or from knowing that over a half of the manor's holdings had to be disposed of before the elder THOMAS SOUTHWORTH died or from the cost of remodeling Lower Hall, the new lord Thomas began to sell the manor's properties within a year of receiving the real estate when the 7 year trust ended. The first to go was Lower Brockholes, 180 acres, in 1604 followed by Hoghton Peel, 110 acres, being sold to JAMES BANKES of Winstanley in 1605. Major reductions in acreage came in 1616 when Southworth manor, 1280 acres, was sold as was Pleasington, 94 acres; the moiety in Higher Brockholes was sold in 1620; in 1624 Lower Hall was separated from the SOUTHWORTH moiety of Samlesbury and its 1480 acres sold to SIR THOMAS WALMSLEY who already held the DE HOLAND moiety of Samlesbury. In 1641 Mellor manor, 1030 acres, was inherited by two daughters of the younger THOMAS SOUTHWORTH while the remnants of Samlesbury was inherited by the younger THOMAS's brother JOHN SOUTHWORTH. Southworth lords continued to hold the diminishing Samlesbury until 1679, when it was sold by EDWARD SOUTHWORTH to THOMAS BRADYLL. THOMAS BRADYLL, a descendant of the SOUTHWORTH of Highfield cadet branch, never lived at the hall but stripped much of its interior features to use at his main house of Conishead Priory at Ulverston. He then rented the hall out to handloom weavers before it was converted into the Bradyll Arms Inn in 1830. The next owner was JOHN COOPER who bought the building in 1850 and leased it as a boarding school for girls being taught according to the Montessori system.



<sup>8</sup> William Alexander Abram, [A history of Blackburn Town and Parish](#) (Blackburn, Eng: 1877) p 85.

## Lower Hall, Samlesbury

**c1450 modifications:** The 1815 engraving on the previous page by CA Buckler shows the entrance (\*) to the present end bay before it was modified in 1864. Dating the modifications, the doorway is typical of early to mid-15<sup>th</sup> century meaning it was more likely built by RICHARD SOUTHWORTH who came of age in 1441 or his son SIR CHRISTOPHER SOUTHWORTH rather than the alleged builder being JOHN SOUTHWORTH who was a minor until 1499.

**Before** the restoration of 1835: A drawing of the exterior by C. A. Buckler showing the great hall and part of the south wing shows a great deal of original detail which no longer exists, as well as the dilapidated condition of the building at the time is in Parker's Domestic Architecture, iii, 215. Parker's also shows no windows in the great hall north of the bay at that time, but two doors, one a late insertion, but the other, probably original, at the north end, with a shaped head. There were buildings under separate and lower roofs at the west end of the south wing before 1835 that are shown in an illustration in The Pictorial Hist. of Lancs. 1844, p. 233. Exactly which hall the engraving pictures is uncertain since, despite saying it was Lower Hall, it matches up very well with Upper Hall; perhaps they were not only built at the same time but were remodeled at the same time.

**Restoration** of 1835: The writer of The Pictorial Hist. of Lancs, (1844) refers to great changes in the mansion, stables and coach-houses having been added in 1835, and the hall disfigured with whitewash (p. 293).

**1852:** The sketch of Samlesbury in Alfred Rimmer's Old Halls (1852) shows the gallery at that time to be much plainer *than at present, i.e. 1911*.

*The following three footnotes to the description of Lower Hall in the above book clearly refer to some particular change at Lower Hall, but 'they' and 'it' are not linked to a structure:*

<sup>70</sup> *They were formerly at the extreme ends of the wall, the canopied recess occupying the whole of the middle space.*

<sup>71</sup> *It was sketched by the Rev. S. J. Allen, c. 1833, and is illustrated in Taylor, op. cit.68*

<sup>76</sup> *It was apparently intact externally in 1877. See Abram, Hist. of Blackburn, 671, where an illustration is given, and Croston's Samlesbury, 1871.*

JOSEPH HARRISON bought the hall in 1862 and substantially renovated it. Around this time it still featured the following interesting items:

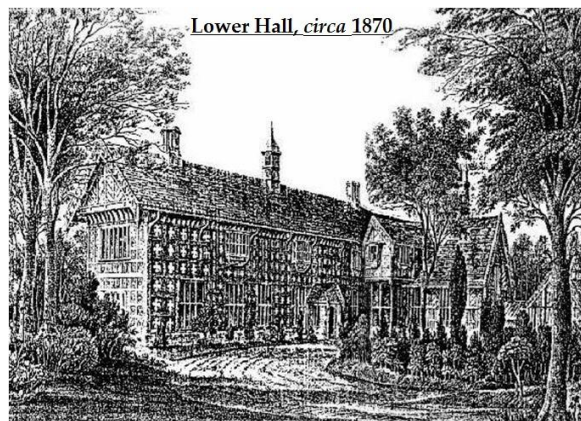
- A carved picture of CATHERINE OF ARAGON and HENRY VIII was above each doorway.
- On the inside of the roof compartments were painted various scenes based on the lives of certain, unidentified, saints; it is not known if any were preserved.
- On the exterior are huge wooden medallions adorned with wood cuts in bold relief of various heads in profile. From recent photographs it appears these may still exist but are painted the same dark color as the other wooden accent which has a flattening effect.

In 1877 it was described in ABRAM'S book as being a "*rather secluded old house in a secluded situation on the bank of the Ribble. Fronts to the south, 3-story gabled projection for porch, fronted with brick, surrounded by orchard. A large apartment in the Hall was used as a chapel*

*for the RC of Samlesbury during a long period.*” HARRISON had overspent for the renovation and, rather than face financial ruin, shot himself in 1878. Whether WILLIAM HARRISON, possibly a brother who lived at the Lower Hall, inherited the property is not known; he did write a history of the manor which has received good reviews in general. In the 1890s it was bought by FREDERICK BAYNES who also spent money on its renovation. He was Mayor of Blackburn and was appointed a Deputy-Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Lancashire for 1900. After he moved out in 1909 the hall was then left empty to deteriorate until it was bought in 1924 by a building firm who intended to demolish it and build a housing estate. However, £1,500 was raised by 6 local businessmen and the Hall was purchased in 1925 and put in the hands of the Samlesbury Hall Trust, who have managed the 5-acre site since then. Centered on Lower Hall, the Trust operates a 4-star lodge and restaurant with a 9-hole golf course & pro shop; the Hall also houses an art gallery and antiques dealers with a gift shop. It is a popular venue for weddings hosting about 75 each year.

“The oil painting of a woman in Protestant clothing, must be important in a Catholic house. She is. This is the **only original portrait of Alice Carpenter, married to Edward Southworth** who was also a Protestant, second sons could do what they liked without fear of losing any inheritance as they got none anyhow. They decided to go to America on the third ship after the Mayflower, sadly he died and she was pregnant. She married the ports governor and 8 generations later they are Teddy Roosevelt’s family. See the family line.” [source unrecorded]

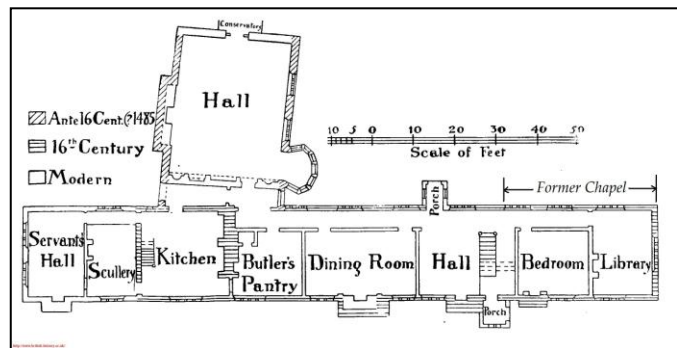
**SAMLESBURY OLD (Lower) HALL** [this section believed to come from Rimmer's Old Halls (1852)] stands on an elevated site between the valleys of the Ribble and the Darwen about midway between Preston and Blackburn, the high road passing close by it on the south side. The house, though much modernized, is still an admirable specimen of timber construction and before the restorations of the last century must have been one of the most interesting domestic buildings in the county. It was originally built on three sides of a courtyard, following the usual type of plan of central hall and projecting end wings, the hall in this case being on the west and the east side remaining open. Only the west and south wings, however, now remain, the north wing which contained the kitchen and servants' apartments having long disappeared. Attempts have been made to prove the great hall to be of 14<sup>th</sup> century date, but the evidence of the building, so far as can be ascertained after two rather drastic restorations, does not seem to point to a date earlier than the 15<sup>th</sup> century, at which period the house was probably rebuilt. The north wing, however, seems either to have been disused or dismantled by the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when alterations were made in the hall by SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH and the south wing rebuilt, the wall on the south side being wholly reconstructed in brick and then assuming its present aspect. All the living rooms of the house appear at this time to have been concentrated in the south wing, the kitchen being at the west end, the dining-room and other family apartments in the middle and the chapel at the east end, the latter being probably the arrangement before existing.





Previous to the making of the present high road about 1825 the house was in a somewhat secluded position, and the line of a moat by which it was formerly surrounded could be traced. The moat, however, has long been filled up and is now merged in the walks and flower-beds of the modern gardens. After the SOUTHWORTHS forsook the house in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (1679) the building was divided and let to various tenants, the BRADDYLLS being non-resident, and during the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was allowed to become more or less dilapidated. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, it was described as structurally sound and in substantial repair, but subsequently it was allowed to fall into decay and it became so badly dilapidated that its complete ruin seemed at one time inevitable. It became at one period a beer-house, probably at the time the high road was in making, but on a full licence being obtained some years later a restoration was carried out in 1835 by which incalculable harm was done to the great hall, many of its architectural features being then completely destroyed. A further and more complete restoration was undertaken by MR. HARRISON, after his purchase of the property in 1862, in order to fit it for its original use as a residence, the south wing being then lengthened at the west end.

Except for the south wall and the modern addition at the west end the house is of timber and plaster construction on a low stone base, but externally the timber work is almost entirely new, only a few of the original upright pieces remaining. The whole, moreover, is uniformly painted dark red, and, though picturesque, the building has lost a great deal of its antiquarian interest, many of the original



architectural features of the elevations towards the courtyards having totally disappeared, little or no attempt having apparently been made at the last restoration to adhere to the original design. The roof of the great hall, which is the full height of the west wing, is covered with modern blue slates and the front wall reconstructed with straight and diagonal timber framing, into which two large modern deal windows have been introduced. The bay window has lost externally all its ancient detail and is now quite plain, and treatment of a similar nature has been meted out to the long elevation on the north side of the south wing, in the lower story of which a series of seven lofty four-light windows 6 ft. wide have been inserted in place of the low wooden mullioned windows high in the wall which seem to have originally existed. The south wing, which is two stories in height, has a long front of 91 ft. 6 in. to the courtyard, the whole of which is now covered with quatrefoil ornament with a plaster cove below the eaves. In the upper floor are three square bay windows, the undersides of which retain their carved ornament, and at either side of the heads of the lower modern windows are carved square paterae set diagonally, some of which belong to the ancient front. The general effect of the whole, however, is one of extreme flatness, relieved somewhat by a modern porch about midway in its length, which though poor in detail breaks rather happily an otherwise too uniform monotony. The cornice here, as throughout the house, is modern and incongruous and the roof is covered with stone slates. The most picturesque feature of the exterior is the bay to the great hall with its square room above faced with quatrefoil ornament and gable over, occupying the angle at the junction of the west and south wings, which, though the detail is nearly wholly modern, retains most of its ancient features.

The south front is built of 2-in. bricks on a stone base, and its length, which was originally 113 ft. but which the modern addition has increased to 143 ft., is broken only by three original projecting chimneys and a later one at the west end. The roof line runs unbroken, except for a modern ventilator, from west to east, and the general effect, as on the side facing the court, is one of flatness and want of distinction. The plaster cove is continued along the side of the building under the eaves, and the windows are square-headed with stone mullions and cinquefoiled lights, many of them being modern restorations. The chimney to the dining-room is externally 12 ft. 6 in. wide, and is built of stone to about two-thirds of the height of the wall, above which, like the others, it is of brick. A small modern brick porch has been added in front of the one door on this side of the building between the two easternmost chimneys. The modern western extension contains offices, with servants' rooms over, and is built of brick faced on the north side with timber and plaster.

The great hall, the original arrangement of which was similar to that at Little Mitton, is 33 ft. 9 in. long by 26 ft. 3 in. wide, with a steep open roof 15 ft. to the wall-plate and 29 ft. 6 in. to the ridge. The proportions were, however, slightly different, as the room has been reduced in length at the north end by about half a bay, and at the south end the wide canopied recess which formerly occupied the middle of the wall with a door on each side having entirely disappeared, its space has been thrown into the passage behind a screen which was erected without any authority at the end of the hall. The result has been to make a further reduction of about 6 ft. at this end, though the line of the two doors which stood on either side of the recess is retained. A drawing (*Rev. S. J. Allen, c. 1833, now in possession of Mr. Henry Taylor, F.S.A., and reproduced by him in Old Halls in Lancs. and Ches. 108.*) of the hall as it was before the alterations of 1835 has fortunately been preserved, together with one of the ancient oak screens which stood at the north end. This screen was a very handsome one dated 1532, and bearing the name of SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH, similar in general appearance and design to that at Rufford Old Hall, and standing detached and movable probably between narrow speres against the walls, carried up to the roof as arched principals. In the 1835 alterations the north end of the hall appears to have been pulled down, the original passage behind the screen destroyed, and the screen itself cut up and used in the erection, at the south end, of the existing screen with the gallery over. Into this, probably at the second restoration, a quantity of later Jacobean woodwork from old bedsteads and other furniture has been introduced, producing a rather strange and incongruous effect. The tall carved finials, which, as at Rufford, formed so conspicuous a feature of the old screen, are, however, rather cleverly worked into the composition of the gallery front. The roof is divided into four bays of unequal size, that at the south being over the gallery and passage. Two of the principal supports are of unusually massive oak and are on the principle of crook construction, with long curved timbers rising from floor to ridge, with tie-beam and curved pieces below. The tie-beam is held by a square king post, which is intersected midway by a horizontal tie, and the truss is strengthened by crossed beams inclining with the slope of the roof. The spaces between the principal rafters and the purlins are plastered and ornamented with diagonal wind braces, the inner sides of which are foliated. The roof has been a good deal restored and the side posts are encased in modern varnished deal to a height of 5 ft. 6 in. from the floor. The principals are unmoulded, but have a simple hollow chamfer on the edge, and the wall-plate is carved with a running floral pattern and embattled along the top. The room, however, is now very much modernized, the old flagged floor having given place to one of wood and the walls papered. The fireplace too is a modern Gothic one of stone inserted in the original

arched opening, which is 15 ft. wide and 7 ft. high to the crown of the arch. The west wall appears to have been rebuilt in stone in the 16th century, and had formerly three low mullioned windows high up below the eaves, one of which, built up, may still be seen from the outside. The original stone chimney shaft has disappeared and given place to one in brick, and there is a good deal of brick patching on the exterior of the wall. The room may have had originally a fireplace in this position, as the disposition of the roof timbers shows no special provision for a louvre. At the south-east corner is a bay window of seven canted sides, 9 ft. in depth and the full height of the room to the wallplate, the lights divided in the middle by a transom. Externally, as before mentioned, the window has been entirely renewed and is quite plain, but internally the mullions are moulded and the transom has a modern vine-leaf pattern on two sides. Over the bay is a small room lit by a small square bay in the gable, the original means of access to which is not certain, but was probably from the south wing.

A recent (2002) article<sup>9</sup> on a neighboring manor has much to say about Samlesbury:

*An ancient ford crossing linked Elston with Samlesbury Lower Hall to the east of Red Scar. The ruined remains of Lower Hall may still be seen on the riverbank, bearing testimony to an earlier building on the site destroyed by Robert the Bruce in 1322. Eight years after his triumph at Bannockburn, the Scottish king was determined to assert Scottish independence. The Scots looted Preston and set fire to some of its wooden buildings before rampaging throughout the pastoral landscape of Grimsargh-with-Brockholes with its timeless river and field mosaics. 'The Ribble ford was used by Robert the Bruce in midsummer 1322 when he burnt Lower Hall and robbed Samlesbury Church of valuables'. After four weeks of absolute mayhem they went home to Scotland leaving the distressed inhabitants of Amounderness (north Lancashire) in a state of poverty and shock, and with not a counsellor in sight! A second building was built on the same site known as Lower Samlesbury Hall and its ruins may still be seen on the river bank. Interestingly, the staircase was salvaged from the ruins of Lower Hall and has since been reincarnated in Old Hall at Cow Hill, Grimsargh. This staircase was originally found in an outbuilding by Mr H. Mallott of Grimsargh House who incorporated it into the Horrockses offices in Stanley Street, Preston, where he was the managing director. When the offices of the old mill were demolished, the staircase was purchased and installed in Old Hall where it remains in situ to this day.*

*Three miles downstream of the Elston ferry an alternative river crossing linked the hamlet of Brockholes with Samlesbury Church and operated from Ferry Boat House, on the south bank. A History of Samlesbury (Eaton, 1936), mentions ways of crossing the Ribble by a medieval ford and ferry and a 19<sup>th</sup>-century bridge. On the river just above Samlesbury Church a ferry was established linking Samlesbury with Brockhall and Preston. It was served by two ferrymen in 1379 who lived nearby on the Samlesbury side. There were incentives to 'ferry across the Ribble', for the boathouse was also a beer shop.*

*Lower Brockholes remained in the hands of the Singletons until 1564, when John Singleton sold the capital messuage called Brockhall Hall to Sir John Southworth of Samlesbury, son and heir of Sir John Southworth who added the large wing to Samlesbury Hall. Sir John Southworth died in 1597 and early in the seventeenth century Lower Brockholes was conveyed to Edmund Breres of Preston, gentleman, who in 1621 mortgaged it to Sir Robert Bindloss, Knight, of Borwick Hall. It descended to a grandson, Francis Bindloss, who built the existing Lower Brockholes Hall (now a farm) in 1634. Over the front door a stone dated 1634 was emblazoned by the arms and initials of Francis Bindloss.*

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<sup>9</sup> David Hindle Grimsargh, *The Story of a Lancashire Village* (Lancaster, Lancashire, Carnegie Publishing Ltd.; 2002)

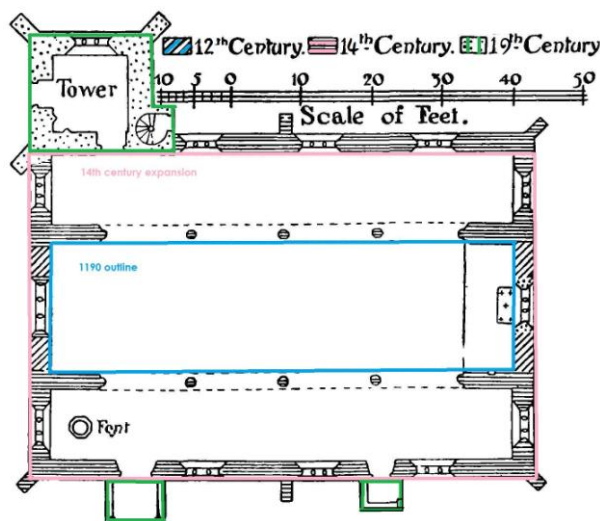
## CHURCHES AND CHAPELS OF SAMLESBURY

The structure of churches was as follows: the *chancel* contained the altar, the seats for officiating and visiting priests and a small table, this area was the responsibility of the rector; the congregation occupied the *nave* which had no seating and it was their responsibility to keep it in good repair. Separating the chancel and the nave was an elaborate *rood screen*; it was a true barrier, preventing congregants from gaining access to the altar.

The name *Samlesbury Chapel* has been used for four different structures though it actually applied to only the *chapel-of-ease* at Samlesbury before 1190.

### CHURCH OF SAINT LEONARD-THE-LESS: Potter's Lane

The earliest parish church for Samlesbury was at Law, almost 8 miles away; with the church in Blackburn being 7 miles distant. This was not practical as attending Mass took most of Sunday once you factored in travel time. Saint Leonard's-the-Less was founded in 1096 but the particulars of that church are not known. The fact that COSPATRIC applied for, and received, permission to build a *chapel-of-ease* for his family and dependents sometime before 1185 indicates there was a need that Saint Leonard's was not able to meet. The site was close to the ferry, a short distance from his home and, presumably, at the original centre of the population.<sup>10</sup>



The parish church at Law was still their parochial church and it was where the parish cemetery was, but Mass was said regularly by a vicar of the parish priest (at COSPATRIC's expense) in Samlesbury. This was properly called *Samlesbury Chapel* as Saint Leonard's-the-Less seems to have continued as well. It is likely that the congregations were combined once the new chapel was built. Some confuse this chapel with one built later as part of the manor house. The building is on Potter's Lane about  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles south of the site of the Lower Hall. The chapel was built 135 years before the Lower Hall and, since the site of the earlier manor-house of GOSPATRIC is not certain, it has been described as being both *close to* and *far*

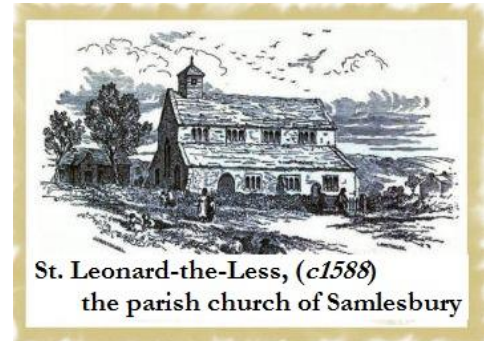
*from* the manor house. It was built for the convenience of the tenants of the manor as well as free citizens of Samlesbury and Samlesbury Bottoms and the many small hamlets scattered around the area. GOSPATRIC prevailed upon a couple of Irish priests staying as his guests to consecrate a cemetery for *Samlesbury Chapel*; burying the dead at Law was an all-day affair and the episodic plagues made burials quite common-place. The priests complied, and the rector of Blackburn approved, but it was to HUGH DE NONANT, Bishop of Lichfield, that the consecration came from. After some opposition, the Bishop was mollified, probably by a hefty donation, and *Samlesbury*

<sup>10</sup> GENUKI for St Leonard and St Mary and St John Southworth Churches. <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/LAN/Samlesbury>

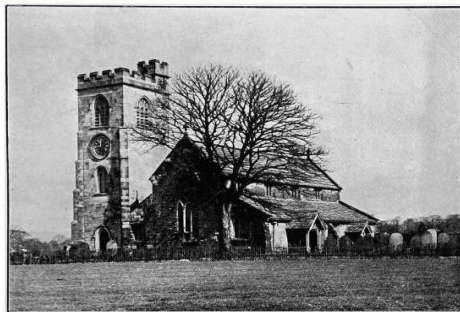


*Chapel* became *Saint Leonard-the-Less Parish Church* when DE NONANT licensed it as such in 1190. It is said the cemetery has been the burial place for the Samlesbury lords ever since but there are no markers or records to confirm this.<sup>11</sup>

The first church building was in the *Romanesque*, or *Normanesque* as it was called in England, style that accompanied WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR in 1066. It was a *heavy* style – tall, thick walls of red sandstone enclosed the long, narrow nave with a single row of pews with a large window with a rounded arch behind the altar to match the much smaller side windows in sets of three, each with a rounded arch. The circular baptismal font dates to the 12<sup>th</sup> century and is made of rough stone with *chamfered* (beveled) edges.



The church was enlarged in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the original roof was raised several feet. To support this height, flying buttresses were constructed on the building's exterior but rather than leave the nave narrow with high ceilings, the area below the flying buttresses was enclosed, resulting in three rows of pews with lower ceilings over the side rows. The *Gothic*-style window behind the altar was probably installed at this time. Two bells were installed as was the gabled turret housing them. One of the bells was inscribed *Campana Jhesu Cristi* (Bell of Jesus Christ). The bells ended up in the residence of a MR. CROOK in Stanley Grange by the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when they were replaced by 8 bells. The church, after being enlarged, was described as:



Parish Church of Samlesbury from the southwest

*The walls are built of yellow sandstone in blocks of fairly large size, but the older masonry is of local red sandstone in small pieces, the line of the old gable at each end being still preserved. The north side is also partly built of red sandstone, probably from the older structure, and the character of the plinths (the bases of the columns that replaced the exterior walls) to the aisles and to the ends of the nave and sanctuary clearly shows the different dates of the building.*



The church fell into disrepair with the suppression of the faith and falling timbers from the roof posed a risk to anyone by the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Its rescue fell to EDWARD STANLEY, the 3<sup>rd</sup> earl of Derby who was a great favorite of QUEEN MARY; he secured the necessary funds to repair it by 1558. Much of the existing structure was kept including most of the walls, saying it was *rebuilt* is an exaggeration.

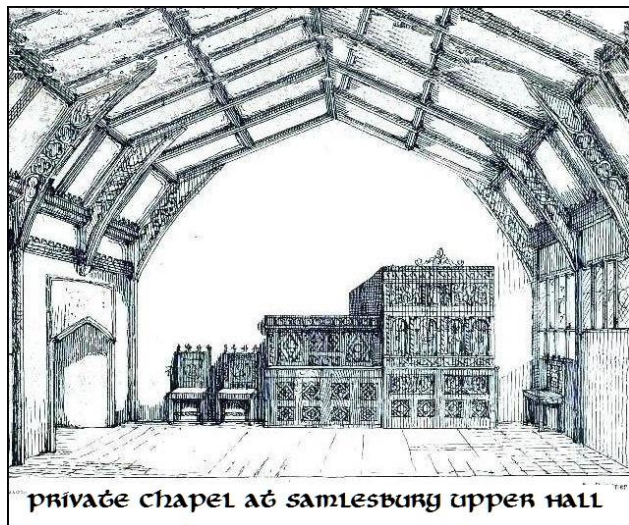
The funerary helmet, shield and sword of SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH who died in 1546, hangs from the wall at the east end of the north side of the nave. The quartered shield contains two blazons – one associated with Southworth Manor and the other with Samlesbury Manor. Many claim that the owner's identity is not known but that blazon was awarded to SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH in 1523.

<sup>11</sup> FR Raines, *Chester Historical Notices*, V.2, Pt.2, (Chetham Society; 1850) p. 292-3. (The author confuses Lower and Upper Halls and misnames them: Lower Hall he names Higher Hall but places both halls at the same place, the site of Lower Hall)

It was converted to an Anglican church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and called the *parish church of Samlesbury*. There was another restoration in 1885 and an almost separate tower and two wooden porches on the south side were added in this restoration or in 1900.

### SAMLESBURY UPPER HALL PRIVATE CHAPEL

*Permission* was granted to build private oratories at Samlesbury Upper and Lower Halls by the Bishop of Lichfield in 1400. Both oratories were subsequently licensed as private chapels in 1420. They were for the convenience of the Lord and Lady, their guests and the manor's servants. A priest, approved by the parochial church and the Bishop, was hired by the Lord who also provided for all that was required to say Mass. There was a separate residence for the priest (which may be the small building next to the oratory in the picture). These private priests were still subservient to the local bishop, especially in matters of doctrine, but disputes constantly arose from questions of jurisdiction and distribution and collection of



tithes. The chapel had a *separate entrance for the poor and a balcony for the rich*; attendance at Saint Leonard-the-Less declined as the 40 or 50 people in residence at the Halls at any given time now attended the private chapels. In 1532, the Upper Hall was remodeled by SIR THOMAS SOUTHWORTH and the chapel was attached to the enlarged north wing. The chapel continued to serve the family until 1553 at least. In that year SIR JOHN SOUTHWORTH purchased several windows from the shuttered Whalley Abbey and had them installed in Upper Hall; with most being *incorporated into the north wing chapel*. The increasing

suppression of the faith following the death of QUEEN MARY eventually led to its adaptive reuse as a morning room. Samlesbury Halls, Upper and Lower, kept to the Roman Catholic tradition all through the anti-Catholic reigns of ELIZABETH I and the STUARTS. Hiding priests and having Mass said led to the sequestering of estates and huge fines that could only be paid by selling land.

The Chapel remained relatively intact for almost 3 centuries despite its change of function. The elaborate wooden rood screen that separated the chancel from the nave was relocated to Conishead Priory in 1834.





In 1835, the end wall of the former chapel was rebuilt in an odd fashion. It looks like the hall was shortened by a half-bay but Buckler's engraving from 1815 shows that the space kept the same dimensions. A *movable screen*, dating to 1532, was broken apart in the 1830s and the *riotous finials* and some other pieces were *cobbled together* with new wood work in a *bizarre Victorian gallery*. It's not certain if this moveable screen is the same as the rood screen. Picture at right shows the intricacy of the wood carving of that screen.

### **CHAPEL OF SAINT CHAD (1532)**

A Roman Catholic Chapel dedicated to SAINT CHAD was built *at the rear* of the Lower Hall in 1532. In 670 CE CHAD OF MERCIA (c634 – 672) was Bishop of the Mercians with the diocesan center at Lichfield. There was also a vestry and a house for the resident Priest. All 3 were built right on the bank of the River Ribble, placing them several hundred feet from the rear of the hall; this helped to keep them hidden during the persecution years. The Jesuits were strong in the area and several Jesuit priests were family members so Saint Chad's may have been a Jesuit institution at first. It has been said *the ban on saying and hearing Mass never did reach Saint Chad*. The chapel was entrusted to the Franciscan order in about 1600, for unknown reasons, where it remained *for over 2 centuries*. Once the restrictions against the Roman Church were relaxed, it seems that Saint Chad's became the local Roman Catholic Church as Saint Leonard-the-Less was gone and the Upper Hall chapel had been incorporated into the north wing and converted to other uses.

Always inconvenient to get to and with the 275 year old buildings in need of extensive reconstruction it was decided that new facilities were needed around 1815. Saint Chad's was shuttered in 1818 with the opening of Saint Mary's Catholic Church in 1818. Within the span of a decade or so, the river undermined foundations of the dilapidated chapel, the vestry and the Priest's house and all three buildings tumbled into the river.

### **THE "HIDDEN CHAPEL" OF UPPER HALL (1570s – 1592)**

As the screws tightened for the Roman Catholics, they became extremely competent in hiding entire chapels where Mass was said right in front, or above, your eyes. Samlesbury had the pre-eminent English clandestine architect head-up the required reconstruction and modifications to both the Upper and Lower Halls and Southworth Hall; other SOUTHWORTH manor-houses had similar construction projects: Higher Brockholes (per British Hx Online), on the far side of the Ribble, got a chapel built; Pleasington Hall had a priest hole *behind the fireplace in the inglenook off the living room*; and Mellor Hall seems likely to have had something built, but this isn't documented. The architect, a certain hunched-backed stone mason who went by the name NICHOLAS OWEN had made quite a name for himself. So effective at hiding chapels in plain sight, by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century he was the most hunted and hated *enemy of the state*. But he was only a name; no government agent or bounty hunter could ever say they had laid eyes on him; only those who put his great skills to use knew what he looked like. He worked during the day as a craftsman making carved stonework under a different name whilst at night he was building secret priest



holes, tunnels and escape routes in Catholic houses and that made him a hero. He never took money for his work but he was the guest of whichever lord he was working for – coming and going could tip off a spy so it worked well for all.

There is only information on the constructions at Upper Hall. He built a secret room *inside a fireplace* in the great hall at Upper Hall, so that a fire could be lit and it would not bother a secreted priest in the least. The picture at right is of the entrance to the hiding place in the Upper Hall fireplace; despite knowing that it is there, it is still difficult to see it! It had several look-out holes so that the priest could observe what was happening outside his safe room. A small chapel was secreted in the north wing where Mass was said; traces of the altar once used are still visible. Its location, as described, is baffling: it was *in the ceiling* above one of the ground floor rooms of the north wing, but not on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Clever OWEN also built a poorly hidden tunnel that was easily found then, and now, as it causes the floors to slope towards it. Knowing the Hall was a target, giving something for the authorities to find was a brilliant way to keep them from finding the real hidden places. Using an existing sewer under the old entrance hall, he fashioned a fake *escape tunnel* – it's still there! Government operatives that raided the Hall in 1592 document the existence of three hiding places however only the two mentioned have been found. A preliminary search for it in March 2005 found what appears to be a small room behind the parlor fireplace that could be similar to the one in the Great Hall, but excavations have yet to be done.

Mass moved from hall to hall during the repression of Elizabeth I. Since Lower Hall was where SIR JOHN SOUTHWORTH and his family, known recusants, lived and they knew they had their own set of government spies watching them, Lower Hall would be a risky place to hold Mass or hide priests.

In the worst of times, when no building was safe from a raid, Mass was said in a area north of Lower Hall called Bezza Wood, off of Bezza Lane.

#### ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF SAINT MARY AND SAINT JOHN SOUTHWORTH

The Church of Saint Mary and Saint John Southworth opened in 1818 on Preston New Road where it overlooks the original Catholic Church, Saint Leonard-the-Less, on Potter's Lane. It replaced the aging and difficult to get to Chapel of Saint Chad located *behind* the Lower Hall on the banks of the Ribble.<sup>12</sup>



Among its prized relics is a *Viaticum Pyx* (which could mean a container, usually of ivory, that holds the Holy Eucharist that a Priest is taking to someone near death; it could also mean the silver chalice that holds the Holy Eucharist in the tabernacle) bearing the date 1695 and a *chasuble* (the outer vestment for a priest) said to be 500 years old. The origin of both is not known.

One website states it was *founded in 1690*, but does not give specifics. Saint Leonard-the-Less is several centuries removed from 1690 and Saint Chad's was built almost 150 years earlier.

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<sup>12</sup> Charles A. Bolton, "A survey of the Salford Diocese and its Catholic past" (Salford Diocese, 1950)



There have been several histories of Samlesbury published. These include:

WILLIAM HARRISON, ESQUIRE, History of Samlesbury Hall (privately printed c1880)

J. CROSTON, A history of the Ancient Hall of Samlesbury (1871)

R. EASTON, A History of Samlesbury in the Hundred of Blackburn (1936)

References to Samlesbury Hall can be found in:

A. RIMMER, *Proc. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Ches.* 4(1852) 33-9.

WILLIAM FARRER and J. BROWNBILL, Victoria History of the Counties of England, Lancashire, VI (1911) pp. 303-10.

H. TAYLOR, Old Halls in Lancashire and Cheshire (1884) pp. 89-93.

W.J. SMITH, *Arch. Jour.* (1970) pp. 272-4.

ANTHONY EMERY, Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales 1300 – 1500 Vol. 2 (2000)

## Mellor Manor

Before the 11<sup>th</sup> century the ancient manor of Walton-le-Dale bordered Samlesbury manor on the east and south. Walton-le-Dale was huge, covering several thousand acres. The aristocratic DE STAVELEY family was based in what was then northwest Lancashire (now in southwest Cumbria) but held property throughout the county. The head of the family, SWAIN DE STAVELEY, was a descendant of none other than COSPATRIC, lord of Samlesbury, and Walton-le-Dale. SWAIN wanted to give something to his younger sons and he managed to convince the crown to create a 1,000 acre manor out of the most northwesterly part of that manor.<sup>1</sup> The matter of choosing a name for the newly created manor had to be settled before the manor could be granted. One of the noteworthy features of this tract was a hill on which ruins of an ancient Roman settlement could be found – it was known as Mellor Moor, hence Mellor Manor. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century Mellor manor was held by the DE HONFORD/DE BOSEDEN family from Cheshire. As was commonplace at the time, the DE BOSEDEN of Mellor manor cadet branch identified themselves by, first, adding *DE MELLOR* after DE BOSEDEN and later using only DE MELLOR. It is impossible to know the name of the earliest lord of Mellor to adopt DE MELLOR *as a surname*, rather than using it to denote a location as both are written the same: WILLIAM DE BOSEDEN DE MELLOR and WILLIAM DE BOSEDEN *de Mellor*. WILLIAM is the first to be found with *de Mellor* in written records dating from the 1220s, followed by RICHARD in 1250, HUGH in 1270 and his son ROBERT in 1282. This last named, SIR ROBERT DE MELLOR-BOSEDEN, was a knight on military campaign with the Lancastrian army near Caernarfon in north Wales at the end of summer 1282. Two other knights on the same campaign were SIR JOHN D'EWYAS of Samlesbury and SIR GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH of Southworth & Croft. This army was needed to protect the English men building the walls of Caernarfon town and castle from Welsh raiding parties. The army encampment was near the village of Llandrillo, south of Caernarfon. That summer SIR ROBERT DE MELLOR-BOSEDEN resigned his manorial rights by deed to SIR JOHN D'EWYAS on 13 September 1282 at '*Hendouyr*' (Llandrillo). This was attested to by several knights including



GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH; WILLIAM and HENRY LE BOTELER; WILLIAM, son of RICHARD LE BOTELER; ROBERT de LATHUM and THOMAS DE AUTREY. Other witnesses included NICHOLAS DE LEE, RICHARD DE MOLYNEUX, ROGER BANASTRE, ADAM DE HINDLEY and WILLIAM DE SINGLETON. Three years later JOHN DE MELLOR, ROBERT's son and heir, signed over his half of a mill in Mellor to the lord, SIR JOHN D'EWYAS. Before 1292, HENRY DE MELLOR, son of WILLIAM DE MELLOR, alienated all remaining Mellor manor possessions and rights he held to SIR JOHN D'EWYAS while in that year ROBERT, son and heir of HUGH DE MELLOR, released any remaining rights he held in Mellor to SIR JOHN D'EWYAS, completing the transfer that started 10 years earlier.

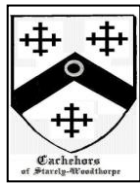
Most manors have a hall or manor-house where the lord

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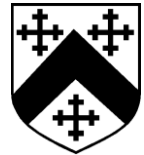
<sup>1</sup> 'General history: Gentry', Magna Britannia: volume 5: Derbyshire (1817), pp. LXXV-XCIX. (and)

'Townships: Mellor', A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 6 (1911), pp. 260-263. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

resides and conducts the business of the manner from, but not always. The D'EWYAS lord of Mellor manor had little need for a residence there because he was also the lord of Samlesbury where he lived in the 4-story Norman-style stone tower measuring 40' on each side that had been built in the 1280s. The 1320s brought changes though – the D'EWYAS stone tower in Samlesbury was destroyed by a raiding Scots army in 1322 and with the marriage of ALICIA D'EWYAS set for 1325, Samlesbury manor would pass to her children by her husband GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH according to the wishes of her grandparents SIR JOHN D'EWYAS and CECILY DE SAMLESBURY. ALICIA'S father NICHOLAS D'EWYAS, had the slightest of grips on Samlesbury manor as he knew he was only holding it until his daughter married. Mellor manor was bestowed on another of JOHN and CECILY'S sons, WILLIAM D'EWYAS. As late as 1336 Mellor manor still did not have a proper manor-house; the chief-house of WILLIAM D'EWYAS was in the nearby town of Samlesbury. The time was right for Mellor to finally have its own hall, or was it? Before one was built, the lordship had passed from the D'EWYAS *lord* to the D'EWYAS *darling*, ALICIA ... and her husband SIR GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH, lord of Southworth, Croft and Samlesbury manors.



Mellor Manor appears to have had another role in the life of the elder SIR GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH, it supplied him with a coat. The DE STAVELEY family who held Mellor Manor in the 12<sup>th</sup> century *voluntarily surrendered* the Coat-of-Arms on the left. The Arms pictured on the right were awarded to GILBERT around 1290. It is likely that GILBERT was familiar with the Arms before he received them.

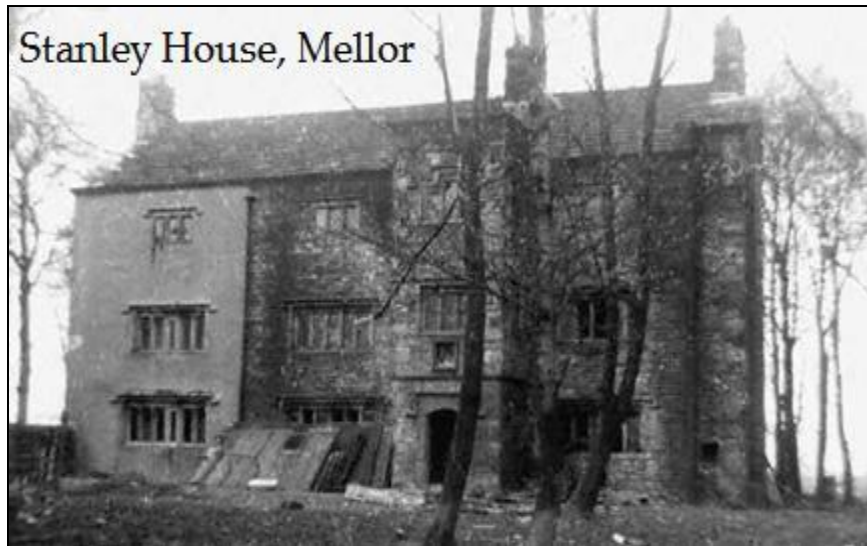


By 1350 Mellor Hall rose on high ground north of Woodfold Park, the third or fourth manor house to be built by SIR GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH. He built one at Southworth around 1320 to replace the century-old Southworth Hall. Five years later he built the grand Lower Hall at Samlesbury, situated on the east bank of the River Ribble, to replace the pile of rubble that remained of the D'EWYAS stone tower after a 1322 raid by the Scots; Upper Hall was built shortly after Lower Hall. Mellor Hall functioned more as a rental property for the ever-growing SOUTHWORTH clan as the lord of Mellor never lived at Mellor Hall. It was also used over the centuries to provide the dower for several SOUTHWORTH widows – the income from the manor provided their living expenses with it always reverting to the SOUTHWORTH of Samlesbury family. It did function as a manor-house though, holding the manorial records and housing the manager of Mellor manor, who was probably one of the hundreds, literally, of SOUTHWORTHS from Southworth, Croft, Samlesbury or any of the dozen or so manors that came and went over the next hundred years. By the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, all manorial functions of Mellor Hall had been transferred to the Lower Hall at Samlesbury and the hall became a true rental property.

The variety of tenants, none, apparently, interested in maintaining Mellor Hall, did not bode well for the old place. Mellor Hall was extensively rebuilt in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; while sources are no more specific than that, it very well could have been rebuilt around 1604 when THOMAS SOUTHWORTH, lord of Southworth and Samlesbury, spent a small fortune in renovations to Southworth Hall and Lower Hall. THOMAS SOUTHWORTH was lord from 1617 to 1624; under his stewardship the estate was greatly reduced in size because his father and grandfather had set in motion the sale of several properties in 1612 to SIR THOMAS IRELAND of Bewsey. The financial situation continued to worsen even after this major sell-off in 1621; so much so that in 1624 THOMAS sold Samlesbury Lower Hall, the seat of the SOUTHWORTH'S since 1325, to SIR THOMAS WALMSLEY who had previously bought the DE HOLAND moiety of Samlesbury manor.

THOMAS SOUTHWORTH'S sons were still minors when he died and they had to wait to be eligible to assume ownership of the much-reduced estate. In 1635 JOHN SOUTHWORTH turned 16 and became lord; unfortunately he died at 17 and his younger brother THOMAS SOUTHWORTH was allowed to inherit at 15 years old. He dies unmarried and childless in 1641 and it was determined that his two sisters JANE and ELIZABETH were his legal heirs. ELIZABETH was married to RICHARD WALMSLEY, cousin of THOMAS who had purchased most of Samlesbury manor, and JANE was married to TIMOTHY SUMNER/ SUMPNER. The Court's determination was challenged by JOHN SOUTHWORTH, the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of the lord JOHN SOUTHWORTH who died in 1612, claiming that he was the legal *heir in taile* or next-in-line after his nephews. The SOUTHWORTHS of Samlesbury were so heavily encumbered by debt to the government that several properties had to be sequestered by the crown as collateral, including Mellor manor, in 1646. During sequestration the legal actions continued over the right to inherit with JOHN successfully petitioning the crown to allow the remaining acreage in Samlesbury and Mellor manor to be his when the debts had been paid and the property released in 1654. He remained lord until his death in 1675. His 3<sup>rd</sup> son EDWARD SOUTHWORTH inherited; the first two sons had died before their father did. It's uncertain if negotiations to sell had been started while his father was alive but almost immediately after EDWARD became lord he started to look for a buyer. On 10 March 1679, Mellor and Samlesbury manors, and their titles, were sold to THOMAS BRADDYLL ESQUIRE. Just after this sale, BRADDYLL built a new manor-house south of the old one in Woodfold Park and called it Woodfold Hall. The new hall wasn't built to last – it was gone by 1850 and left no mark on the landscape to betray its location within Woodfold Park. Every writer gives 10 March 1679 as the end of the SOUTHWORTH'S involvement with the manors, but, they are wrong. THOMAS BRADDYLL'S paternal grandmother was ANNE SOUTHWORTH, daughter of THOMAS SOUTHWORTH, lord of Dalton manor. He was the head of the cadet SOUTHWORTH of Highfield branch. Mellor stayed in the BRADDYLL family until 1829 when THOMAS RICHMOND GALE BRADDYLL lost ownership through a Chancery Court action brought about by his financial indiscretions. The SOUTHWORTH'S and the BRADDYLL'S leased Mellor Hall to several generations of the STANLEY family in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. During their extended tenancy, *Mellor Hall* came to be called *Stanley House*. Mellor Hall/Stanley House, over 4 centuries old, was occupied by the YATES family until 1765; they were followed by a century of various tenants with no history to the hall and it deteriorated until it was abandoned in the 1870s. In 1877, it was described as an uninhabitable ruin that was barely standing.





I was to be disappointed in my expectation of finding the once-grand Mellor Hall no longer stood. A crumbling ruin in 1877, Mellor Hall, built by SIR GILBERT DE SOUTHWORTH in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, was completely rehabilitated and opened as a health spa in 2004.

## Stanley House Hotel & Spa

